

Message Text

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UNCLAS ATHENS 7095

EO 11652 NA

TAGS MPOL, PFOR, GR, US, MARR

SUBJ: US MILITARY EXERCISE IN PELOPONNESE

REF ATHENS 7079 (DTG 131425Z JUL 76)

1. THE SEMI-OFFICIAL ATHENS NEWS AGENCY BULLETING PUBLISHED ON JULY 14, 1976 THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT ON US LANDING EXERCISES.

2. BEGIN QUOTE: THE US SIXTH FLEET MARINE LANDING EXERCISES WILL CARRIED OUT AT CAPE MALEA, IN THE SOUTHERNMOST PART OF THE PELOPONNESE, AROUND THE MIDDLE OF NEXT MONTH. COMMENTING ON CERTAIN REPORTS REGARDING TEH EXERCISES, THE MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE, MR. AVEROFF, MADE THE FOLLOWING STAEMENT YESTERADY; "IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT THESE EXERCISES, WHICH ARE OF LIMITED SCALE, THE GREEK GOVERNMENT'S PERMISSION IS BEING SOUTH. AND THIS PERMISSION IS BEING GRANTED, BECAUSE, AS WAS STATED BY THE PRIME MINISTER IN PARLIAMENT, THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY IS ONE OF FRINDSHIP TOWARDS THE UNITED STATES. AND IN THIS CASE, PERMISSION IS BEING GRANTED, BECAUSE, AS WAS STATED BY THE PRIME MINISTER IN PARLIAMENT, THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY IS ONE OF FRIENDSHIP TOWARDS THE UNITED STATES. AND IN THIS CASE, PERMISSION IS BEING

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GRANTED FOR THE CAPE MALEA REGION." MR. AVEROFF ADDED THAT

"SUCH REQUESTS WILL BE REJECTED ONLY WHEN AND IF THOSE WHO FOLLOW AN OPPOSITE POLICY COME TO POWER, HOWEVER, REGARDLESS OF THIS BASIC PRINCIPLE, IT IS WORTHWHILE NOTING:

1) THAT SIMILAR PERMISSION IS BEING GRANTED BY OTHER ALLIED MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES, AND

2) THESE EXERCISES ARE BEING ATTENDED BY GREEK OFFICERS, WHO LEARN MUCH ABOUT LANDING TACTICS.

FINALLY, REGARDING CLAIMS THAT THE REPORT HAD BEEN OFFICIALLY DENIED LONG AGO, IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT THAT WHAT WAS CATEGORICALLY DENIED IS THAT LARGE-SCALE NAVAL INSTALLATIONS WERE AND ARE BEING BUILT FOR THE HOMEPORTING OF AMERICAN SHIP AT PORT HELI, AND THAT LANDING EXERCISES WOULD BE CARRIED OUT IN THE NAFPLION REGION WITHIN THE FIRST FORTNIGHT OF JULY. BOTH THESE REPORTS WERE COMPLETELY INACCURATE." MR. AVEROFF CONCLUDED. END QUOTE.

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